3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but *ochasa* is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating.

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Esele country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees.

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Vakuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Vakuanyama.

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ovimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Olungunga is not a sweet manioc, so is not eaten raw. The roots are placed to soak in a stream for three or four days before they are roasted on a fire, after which they may be eaten with impunity. As an alternative the roots may be dried in the sun; they are then pounded into meal which is scattered into boiling water so that a mush is formed. The Umbundu name for this preparation is *iputa viutombo*, meaning "mush of manioc." The leaves of *olungunga* are not soaked in water; on the contrary, they may be cooked as soon as they are gathered, but they must not be eaten when warm. There is no danger in eating them after they have been boiled and have been allowed to become cold. The leaves are served with salt or fat.

All the manioc, with the exception of *olungunga*, is sweet. *Kandona* has roots which may be eaten uncooked, but both leaves and roots are sometimes cooked in water. Other varieties of manioc known as *otetu*, *elemba*, and *esela* are eaten in the same way as *kandona*. Manioc is in use all the year, but the greatest quantity is consumed in November and December, a period when the growing corn is not ripe and the storage supplies have dwindled.

Sweet potatoes are plentiful all the year with the exception of the months of November and December. They are placed in the pot, without removal of the skin, and boiled for a period of twenty or thirty minutes. They are taken out, peeled, and eaten. European potatoes are sometimes peeled and made into a mush. The variety of garden produce naturally depends on proximity to a trading post, a mission, or some other European settlement.

In propagating manioc a stem is cut off from the parent plant which is about three feet high; but probably two or three years pass before the tubers are considered large enough for use. Sweet potatoes are planted in January, but there is very little of this food available in February and March. Toward the end of March or early in April a few potatoes may be ready for consumption.

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*, Leguminosae) are planted in October by women who prepare patches of ground which are drilled with holes one inch deep and eight inches apart. One nut is placed in each hole after the shell has been removed. Above the ground small leaves appear. After the flower-stalk withers it has the peculiarity of elongating and bending down. In this way the young pod is forced underground, and the seeds mature a little way below the surface.

Some natives employ irrigation by leading small channels of water from a hillside stream to a garden containing maize and

273 ant said, "Sometimes a man who has drunk this beer will sleep on the ground all day and say nothing."

● 263 438 Salt is a welcome gift in all parts of Angola. Native tribes appreciate its culinary value but show no eagerness to barter for the commodity. At the present time salt is sold in every trader's store, but in earlier times the substance had to be obtained along caravan routes from the coast and was therefore more highly prized than it is today. 317 The Ovimbundu realize the value of salt in the diet of cattle; therefore [231] the animals are occasionally driven to a salt lick in the hills. The Ovimbundu do not use this salt for their own diet, possibly because the salt enjoyed by the cattle is some form of potash and not sodium chloride.

[171] The Vachokue extract salt from the leaves of a river plant by burning it to ashes which are soaked and strained. This is a common African method, but I did not hear of it among the Ovimbundu. The probability is that the Ovimbundu have always obtained salt from the coast.

372 In connection with cooking and brewing beer, methods of making fire are of importance.

Matches are coming into use among the Ovimbundu, but the necessity for them is not great as the hearth fire is not extinguished. [354] In the center of each hut is a fireplace made of three hearth-stones over which logs of wood are placed with their ends in the fire which is kept alight by pushing the logs forward from time to time. A blaze is made by breaking off bark from the logs, placing it on the center of the fire and blowing. Fire is carried from one place to another by conveying a smoldering log. In the Esele country boys may be seen setting off at dawn to scare birds in the corn field, each carrying fire with him.

Usually the children or some other members of the family sleep on mats close to the fire, which requires no attention other than a pushing forward of the logs.

372 171 The Vasele make fire by the twirling method, and at Ngalangi the same procedure was witnessed. In the twirling method two different kinds of wood are used, soft wood for the base and hard wood for the twirling stick. The twirler used at Ngalangi was a piece of cane into the end of which a piece of hard white wood was secured by binding. Ngonga, my interpreter and informant, thinks that any man of the Ovimbundu could make fire by the twirling method if the necessity arose, but the performance witnessed at Ngalangi led me to doubt the truth of this statement. The operator

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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585 be described.[18] The bride, if she belongs to another village, will arrive in the evening accompanied by some girls who are kin to her. She sits down on the bed in the house of the bridegroom with her companions. A crowd of people of the village and neighbourhood dance in and about the hut and people come in to talk to the bride. The bridegroom may also come in and sit on the bed with friends, but he will not take any particular notice of his bride. The dancing will go on till well into the night. This usually happens on a Saturday night so that the main part of the festivity will fall on the Sunday which all Ovimbundu, Christian or pagan, observe as a day of rest.

On the Sunday morning little will happen, though there may be some dancing and the bride and her companions will comb one another's hair. In the afternoon (usually about four), the time being told by the sun, comes the procession and the feast. For the procession bride and bridegroom walk together, both dressed in as European style of clothing as can be obtained. The procession advances dancing and singing, with the exception of the bridegroom and bride whose sedateness is striking. On the way an archway may be erected, made of branches. Under this, concealed in a blanket, will be lying the father's sister or other senior kinswoman of the groom to whom he will make a present of money. Continuing, the couple will arrive at an enclosure built for the purpose with a wooden framework covered over on the sides with branches with leaves on and mats, where a table is laid in European style at which the customary Umbu-
[263] ndu food, mush made from maize flour, and relish (that is almost anything, meat or vegetables, which is not mush) is served. Others besides the bride and bridegroom are allowed into the enclosure—this is not a private rite. It is at this point that *oku fwikisa* takes place, that is, the feeding of affines to break down avoidances. Food is served to the guests on basket plates, one plate per village represented. The actual serving will be done by kinsmen or friends of the bridegroom. After the meal will come further dancing.

The next day a party of kin and fellow-villagers may set out

[18] For accounts of the traditional marriage ceremony see Hastings, pp. 94–101 and R. K. Evambi. 'The Marriage Customs of the Ovimbundu', *Africa*, 1958, pp. 342–8.